



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE, AND SEVENTH ARMY
UNIT 29351
APO AE 09014-9351

AEAGA-S

23 November 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Holiday Safety and USAREUR Unit Safety Certification

This memorandum expires 1 May 2005.

1. References.

- a. AE Pamphlet 385-1, Safety Themes, 10 November 2004.
- b. Memorandum, HQ USAREUR/7A, AEAGA-S, 23 August 2004, subject: USAREUR 2004-2005 Winter Safety Campaign.

2. The holiday season is approaching quickly. This time of year is normally a time for joyous celebration. For many in garrison in Europe, this is still true; however, for many other USAREUR personnel the ongoing combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan mean heightened anxiety for family members of our deployed Soldiers. For those of us in Europe, the high operating tempo and winter weather will contribute to increased risk to life and limb. Our number-one priority for the upcoming holidays will be the safety and welfare of our Soldiers, civilians, and family members. Our goal is not a single death over the holiday period—from now through the New Year's Day weekend. To meet this goal we must all be fully committed to safety for the entire period. The information provided in this memorandum will be used as an adjunct to the USAREUR Winter Safety Campaign to help us keep our people safe over the holidays.

3. The holiday season can be deadly. Last year at this time one USAREUR Soldier was killed and several others were injured in vehicle crashes. The Soldier who died was driving too fast and lost control of his vehicle when he tried to avoid a truck that had pulled into his lane. Two other serious vehicle crashes also occurred during this time, one when a driver lost control of his vehicle on an icy road, the other when a Soldier lost control of his motorcycle while riding under limited-visibility conditions over a poor road surface. We also had several serious injuries related to the weather and holiday activities. These accidents could very well have resulted in fatalities.

4. This year's holiday period will be extremely demanding as we train, redeploy, and deploy units, and provide support for the Rest and Recuperation (R&R) Program. In addition, many of our Soldiers and civilians will be separated or preparing to separate from loved ones due to commitments to the Global War on Terrorism and operations in the Balkans. To ensure the safety of our Soldiers and civilians during this turbulent time, we must do far more than simply give a safety briefing before we release them for the holidays.

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5. Commanders, including rear detachment commanders, must concentrate on mitigating risks and using the unit chain of command to take care of their people and maintain discipline over the holidays. First-line leaders must be personally involved in discussing and planning off-duty activities with subordinates, and they must conduct *Under the Oak Tree* counseling to ensure that appropriate risk-mitigation measures are implemented. The entire chain of command must know and use the risk-mitigation tools identified in the USAREUR Winter Safety Campaign. AE Pamphlet 385-1 and enclosures 1 and 2 provide more information to help commanders with this process.

6. Commanders must concentrate on several critical safety hazards during the holiday period. The following are of greatest concern and require special attention:

- Alcohol poisoning and excessive alcohol consumption.
- Driving over the speed limit or too fast for road conditions.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Hazards associated winter-sports activities.
- House and apartment fires involving holiday decorations, open candle flames, overloaded electrical circuits, and unattended cooking.
- Suicides and attempted suicides.

7. Central to the USAREUR Winter Safety Campaign is the reconstitution of unit safety programs and the USAREUR Unit Safety Certification process. The USAREUR Winter Safety Campaign requires units to achieve safety certification by 30 April 2005.

a. I want commanders to use the time between now and the beginning of the holiday half-day schedule to review the plans for their units to achieve safety certification status by the deadline. Units that have met all the USAREUR Unit Safety Certification requirements stated in paragraph 4d of the USAREUR 2004-2005 Winter Safety Campaign memorandum will request certification by submitting a memorandum through their chain of command to the USAREUR Safety and Occupational Health Office. Enclosure 3 provides the format for the request.

b. As part of the USAREUR Winter Safety Campaign, a keychain has been developed to recognize units that achieve USAREUR Unit Safety Certification status. The keychain shows both the USAREUR and Army safety campaign slogans and the USAREUR *Under the Oak Tree* symbol. Until supplies are exhausted, keychains will be awarded to units that achieve unit safety certification. These keychains may be given to all Soldiers and appropriated fund civilian (U.S. and local national) employees in a unit that achieves unit safety certification. The request for USAREUR unit safety certification needs to identify the number of keychains needed. The USAREUR Safety and Occupational Health Office will distribute keychains and award certificates directly to units that achieve safety certification status. The keychain should be treated as a significant award and recognition of the unit's commitment to safety. Appropriate times to distribute the keychains include during *Under the Oak Tree* counseling sessions and unit formations.

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8. We live in a complex world of war and uncertainty. We have a great Army and USAREUR is doing its part to win the war. I am very, very proud of everyone who serves our Nation during this GWOT era. Perhaps the greatest tragedy during this time of war is that we continue to lose our personnel to needless accidents—especially car / motorcycle crashes. As leaders, we can make a difference and save lives, while we take on the responsibility of executing for our Nation, Any Mission, Anywhere.



B. B. BELL
General, USA
Commanding

3 Encls

1. Holiday Safety Topics and Tools
2. Seasonal Events and Fire Prevention
3. Sample Request for USAREUR Unit Safety
Certification and “Under the Oak Tree” Keychains

DISTRIBUTION:
A (AEPUBS)

HOLIDAY SAFETY TOPICS AND TOOLS

Topic	Available Classes and Checklists
Chains	Chain Inspection Serviceability Checklist Tire-Chain Safety Briefing
Cold Weather	Cold Weather and Weather-Related Injuries
Designated Driver	Commander Holiday Safety Hero Briefing (Designated Driver) Click It or Ticket
Electrical Hazards	Electrical Hazards in the Home
Fire Prevention	Fire-Prevention Issues and Measures Holiday Fire-Prevention and Carbon-Monoxide Briefing and Checklist
Fireworks	New Year's Fireworks Safety Briefing
Food Safety	Food-Safety Briefing
Holiday Travel	Army in Europe Command Policy Letter 3 Holiday Travel Briefing
Recreation	Skiing, Sledding, and Snowboarding Safety Briefings
Tree Safety and Toys	Holiday Tree and Plant Safety Toy Safety Checklist
Vehicle-Accident Prevention	Reducing Motor-Vehicle Accidents in USAREUR—A Risk-Management Approach Wheeled Vehicle Accident Avoidance
Winter Vehicle Preparedness	Vehicle-Lighting Inspection Winter Vehicle Prep Checklist Winter Vehicle-Preparedness Briefing
Winter Driving	Limited Visibility Vehicle Operations in Snow, Rain, Fog, and Ice (All)

USAREUR Safety Web site:

<http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/main.htm>

SEASONAL EVENTS AND FIRE PREVENTION

Decorating our homes and offices for the holidays is a beautiful tradition. Hospital emergency rooms, however, treat thousands of people each year for injuries involving holiday lights, decorations, and Christmas trees. We can help avoid injury and ensure that this holiday season is a safe one by taking the following safety measures:

1. Christmas Trees. Putting up a Christmas tree is one of the most popular traditions of the season. A Christmas tree, however, is a fire hazard. Christmas trees are involved in many fires resulting in death, injury, and property loss and damage each holiday season. Whether you choose a real or artificial tree, safety should be your top priority.

a. When purchasing an artificial tree, look for a *fire resistant* label. Although this label does not mean that the tree will not catch fire, it does indicate that the tree will resist burning and that the fire should be easier to extinguish.

b. When purchasing a real tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, and its needles do not break when bent and are hard to pull off the branches. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin. When bounced on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.

c. When setting up a tree, place it away from heat sources such as fireplaces and radiators. Because heated rooms rapidly dry out real trees, be sure to keep the treestand filled with water. Place the tree away from where people normally walk, and do not block doorways.

d. Dispose of the tree properly. Never burn it in the fireplace. Recycle or discard the tree according to local regulations.

2. Lights.

a. Indoors and out, use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory. Check each set of lights—whether new or old—for broken or cracked plugs, frayed or bare wires, and loose connections; and throw out damaged sets. If you string lights together using built-in connectors, do not join more than 200 miniature lights or 50 large lights. Use no more than three standard-size sets or strings of lights for each single extension cord.

b. Keep cords out of high-traffic areas where people can trip over them. Do not run cords under rugs or carpets, since wires can overheat and the surrounding material can catch fire. Keep cords and plugs away from the water in the treestand. Keep lights away from carpeting, furniture, and drapes.

c. Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be shocked or electrocuted. Do not insert new bulbs or change fuses when lights are plugged in. Place the bulbs so they are not in direct contact with needles or ornaments. Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm support to protect the lights from the wind. Use only insulated staples or hooks to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks.

d. Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short circuit and start a fire.

e. Do not overload electrical circuits. For added protection against electric shock, plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground-fault-circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased commercially.

3. Decorations. Decorations can add to the enjoyment and beauty of the holidays—and to the hazards. Consider how safe your decorations are and remove those that pose risks to your family, especially items that are hazardous to small children and pets. Consider the following precautions as you decorate a tree or place items around your home or office:

a. Use only noncombustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children.

b. Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreen or flammable decorations. Always use nonflammable holders and place candles where they cannot be knocked down and where objects such as curtains cannot blow over them. Keep matches, lighters, and candles away from children.

c. Take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable in homes with small children. Keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.

4. Fire Safety.

a. Residential fires caused by candles are twice as likely to occur in December as any other month of the year. Home-candle fires are at an all-time high, and candles show no signs of losing their appeal. Their soft light, rich fragrance, and cozy glow make them trendier than ever this holiday season. Their colors and scents enhance everyday life and remind us of special events. Candles, however, can also trigger events that can cause injury and even death.

(1) Candles cause 2.4 percent of all fires, result in 6 percent of all injuries from fires, and account for 3 percent of all fatalities from fires. About 10 percent of candle fires are caused by children playing with candles. These figures are increasing as the use of candles increases. Candles, however, still rank far behind cigarettes, matches, and lighters as the primary causes of residential fires.

(2) Candle-safety precautions for the holidays are as follows:

- Never leave burning candles unattended. Extinguish all candles before going to sleep or leaving a room where candles are lit.
- Place candles well away from curtains, bedding, and other flammable materials.
- Keep candles away from table decorations, trees, and other greenery.
- Do not place lighted candles in windows.
- Do not use candles to decorate a tree.

- Blow out candles when they are less than 2 inches tall.
- Trim candle wicks to ¼ inch.

b. Smoking and the careless use of smoking materials are the major causes of home fires and related deaths and injuries. Children playing with matches or lighters start around three out of every four fires. Almost half of home fires start in the bedroom. Holidays increase the potential for fire, and holiday decorations, candles, and cooking are the primary causes.

c. Based on our annual fire experience, more emphasis on fire safety is required during the holidays. As a safety precaution, all of us should plan ahead by establishing an evacuation plan for our building or home, practicing the evacuation plan, and posting emergency numbers by the telephone. In case of fire—

- Quickly get everyone out of the building or house. Notify your neighbors.
- Call the fire department immediately before attempting to fight the fire yourself. Be sure everyone in your family and unit knows how to call the fire department.

d. Army family housing has hard-wired smoke detectors installed, but occupants must test these devices to ensure they are in good working condition. If you have battery-operated smoke detectors, be sure to test them to ensure they work this holiday season.

e. Equip your home with a fire extinguisher. Know how to maintain and use it. Remember to use the correct type of fire extinguisher for the fire. Before you attempt to fight a fire that is rapidly growing or smoky, get everyone else out of the building or house and call the fire department. Tips for the proper use of fire extinguishers include the following:

- Keep the extinguisher in good working order. Check the pressure at least once a month. Store it in an accessible area at a height at which it is easy to reach.
- Use the “PASS” method (Pull, Aim, Squeeze, and Sweep) to extinguish a fire:
 - P:** Pull the pin or break the paper seal.
 - A:** Stand the recommended distance from the fire (as indicated by the label on the extinguisher) and aim the extinguisher at the base of the flames.
 - S:** Squeeze the handle or press the button while holding the extinguisher upright.
 - S:** Sweep the extinguisher from side to side, covering the area of the fire with the extinguishing agent.
- Use a fire extinguisher only when it is safe to do so. If the fire is too big or if it is spreading or threatening to block your escape path, leave the area immediately. If necessary, do not hesitate to use the extinguisher to clear an escape path.

f. Never leave cooking unattended. Keep combustibles away from burners. Establish a “kid-free” zone 3 feet around your stove. Turn pot handles inward, toward the back of the stove, so pots cannot be knocked off or pulled down by small children. Keep your stovetop, oven, and grease trap clean.

5. Toy Safety. Toys are meant to provide joy and entertainment, but they are linked to many injuries. Children age 4 and under are at especially high risk. Most toys are safe but can be dangerous if they are misused or wind up in the hands of children who are too young for them. The appropriate selection and proper use of toys, combined with parental supervision, can greatly reduce the incidence and severity of toy-related injuries.

a. Because of their natural desire to put everything into their mouths and the small size of their upper airways, children under age 3 are at greater risk than older children from choking on toys. Older children, however, are as likely to choke on a latex balloon as children under age 3.

b. The Federal Hazardous Substances Act bans any toy or children’s article that consists of or contains any hazardous substance, including hazardous levels of lead, or that presents an electrical, mechanical, or thermal hazard.

c. The Child Safety Protection Act requires that choking-hazard warning labels be placed on packaging for small balls, balloons, marbles, and certain toys and games with small parts that are intended for use by children ages 3 to 6. This act also bans any toy intended for use by children under age 3 that may pose a choking, asphyxiation, or ingestion hazard.

d. The Labeling of Hazardous Art Materials Act mandates the labeling of hazardous art materials as inappropriate for use by children.

e. The toy industry has established voluntary toy-safety standards under the Standard Consumer Safety Specification on Toy Safety (ASTM F963) to minimize the risk of injury from toys during normal intended use and reasonable foreseeable abuse.

f. Toy guns must conform to marking requirements under the U.S. Department of Commerce Marking of Toy Look-Alike and Imitation Firearms regulation to distinguish them from real guns.

g. When selecting toys, consider the child’s age, interests, and skill level; look for high-quality design and construction; and follow age and safety recommendations on labels.

h. Always supervise children at play. Play is even more valuable when adults become involved and interact with children during play rather than supervising from a distance.

i. Teach children to put toys away safely after playing. Ensure that toys intended for younger children are stored separately from those for older children.

j. Inspect old and new toys regularly for damage and potential hazards. If a toy is damaged, fix it immediately or throw it out.

k. Check the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Web site (<http://www.cpsc.gov>) regularly to obtain information on recent toy recalls.

6. Poisonous Plants. A large percentage of calls received by poison-control centers are related to people having eaten plants. Most cases involve children under 6 years old. Most people do not report any adverse effects from the plant; however, a few report symptoms or require medical attention. Two of the most frequently ingested plants are the poinsettia and holly.

a. General. Teach children never to put any part of a plant (bark, berries, leaves, stems) into their mouths. Keep toxic plants out of reach of young children and pets. For any questions or concerns, call your local medical facility poison-control center.

b. Holly (Toxic). Most cases of holly ingestion involve young children during the winter holiday season. Eating a small number of holly berries may result in mild to moderate gastritis (nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramping, and diarrhea) and possibly drowsiness. Some symptoms may last up to 20 hours. There is no antidote, since the specific toxin that causes the symptoms has not been identified. Treatment is often unnecessary if the number of berries eaten is small; however, the local medical facility poison-control center should be contacted for any concerns. Serious problems may occur if several berries are eaten. In severe cases, treatment at a medical facility may be necessary.

c. Mistletoe (Toxic). Mistletoe is a parasitic plant that is frequently used as a Christmas decoration. All parts of the plant are poisonous, especially the berries. Eating the berries can cause abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions, mental confusion, hallucinations, high blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, and other heart problems. Eating a small number of berries will probably cause only mild gastritis (nausea and vomiting). Eating less than three berries or two leaves probably will not cause significant problems; however, the local medical facility poison-control center should be contacted for any concerns. Medical attention should be sought immediately if more berries or leaves are eaten.

d. Poinsettia (Nontoxic). Poinsettias are commonly seen around Christmas. This plant has a bad (and inaccurate) reputation for being poisonous. Eating the plant will cause little if any symptoms in most cases. The most common symptoms are nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Treatment is usually not required as long as the vomiting does not continue for a long time. Other symptoms include contact dermatitis and skin irritation. These occur in 5 to 20 percent of reported skin exposures and are believed to be caused by the plant's milky white sap. The sap is very irritating and can be toxic in large amounts. If exposed to the sap, the skin or eyes should be flushed with water for about 15 minutes. If the irritation or pain continues, medical help may be required. No other special treatment is required unless an unusual or severe reaction occurs.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

UNIT NAME
UNIT NUMBER
APO AE XXXXX-XXXX

Office Symbol

date

MEMORANDUM THRU *Unit's Higher Headquarters*

FOR USAREUR G1 (AEAGA-S), Unit 29351, APO AE 09014-9351

SUBJECT: Request for USAREUR Unit Safety Certification and "Under the Oak Tree" Keychains

1. Reference memorandum, HQ USAREUR/7A, AEAGA-S, 23 August 2004, subject: USAREUR 2004-2005 Winter Safety Campaign.

2. I certify that *unit name* meets the seven requirements specified in paragraph 4d of the reference necessary to achieve unit safety certification:

a. I have completed the Commanders Safety Course.

b. My senior NCO, *grade and name*, has completed the (*select one*) Commanders Safety Course, Senior NCO Safety Course, or CATC Safety Officer/NCO Course (SOC 40).

c. My Safety Officer, *grade and name*, has completed SOC 40, is appointed on orders as the (*unit name*) Safety NCO, and is performing duties in this capacity.

d. My first-line leaders (sergeants and above) understand the Cody Model and know where to find tools to compensate for "gaps" in experience or knowledge. Specifically, they are familiar with (*specify*).

e. *Grade and name of safety officer* is registered for the Eur-Safety Net List Server and (*for aviation units*) the USAREUR Aviation Safety Officer List Server.

f. *Grade and name of safety officer* is registered and using the U.S. Army Safety Center Risk Mitigation Information System (RMIS) and is registered and prepared to use the Accident Reporting Automation System (ARAS) when implementing guidance is released by USAREUR.

g. The *unit name* is subscribed to the U.S. Army Safety Center Countermeasure Magazine and (*for aviation units*) Flightfax.

3. Documentation to support the information provided above is maintained by my safety officer and is available for review. I request that ____ (*amount*) keychains be provided for distribution to each soldier and appropriated fund civilian in the *unit name*.

4. The point of contact for this action is *grade and name of safety officer*, DSN xxx-xxxx or e-mail: *name@us.army.mil*.

*Unit Commander's
Signature Block*